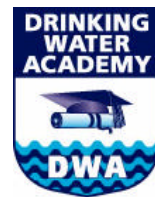




Fact Sheet

The Drinking Water Academy

DRAFT



WHAT IS THE DRINKING WATER ACADEMY?

The Drinking Water Academy (DWA) is a long-term training initiative established by the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW) to expand EPA's capability to support states and other organizations as they implement the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996. The goal of the Drinking Water Academy is to support implementation by assisting EPA, states and tribes to build program capability to successfully carry out the SDWA requirements. This, in turn, will promote increased program compliance and greater public health protection.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

The DWA was created in response to the far reaching changes brought forth by the 1996 SDWA Amendments. The amendments created new responsibilities and new funding opportunities for EPA and states. As a result, EPA has promulgated and will continue to promulgate new regulations, and has hired new personnel to assist in the implementation of these new requirements. States are required to adopt new comprehensive and integrated authorities and new regulations, place greater emphasis on protecting source waters from contamination, and encourage increased public involvement in ensuring safe drinking water. Furthermore, in addition to maintaining their existing drinking water programs, states have developed new funding programs to provide low-cost loans for the construction of important drinking water infrastructure needs.

NEED FOR TRAINING?

The new requirements and approaches to regulating drinking water systems have increased the need for training of EPA, states, and tribes, particularly for personnel new to SDWA programs. The Academy will help fulfill these needs and sustain a high level of expertise in drinking water programs, which may otherwise be diminished through personnel changes and lack of sustained training. The DWA will help strengthen the knowledge of all staff about statutes, regulations, and program activities which will, in turn, provide greater protection of public health through greater protection of public water supplies. Initially, the Academy will primarily serve EPA staff. Once the Academy has developed a more comprehensive program, it will be expanded to serve states, tribes, and others.

WHAT TYPES OF TRAINING NEEDS WILL BE ADDRESSED?

The DWA curricula are being designed to meet the training needs of SDWA EPA and state program staff responsible for Public Water System Supervision, Underground Injection Control, Ground Water, and Source Water Protection programs. Training will take place through a combination of lectures, workshops, audio-visual techniques, and on-site inspections where appropriate. Field work, where applicable, may include inspections of public water systems and UIC wells. Trainers will have extensive experience with SDWA programs.

IS THERE STATE INVOLVEMENT IN THE DWA?

States are playing an active role in the DWA from the beginning, even though they are not the primary audience initially. The Academy has set up a work group composed of EPA Headquarters and regional staff, and state representatives. The primary mission of the work group is to assist the Academy in prioritizing the type and development of training materials for the Academy and to provide guidance during the drafting and implementation of Academy curricula and training sessions.

HOW CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION?

For general information on the SDWA, call the Safe Drinking Water Act hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or (202) 260-7908. For information on the Drinking Water Academy, please visit the DWA website at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa.html> or contact James Bourne at (202) 260-5557 or bourne.james@epa.gov.